

Austria: Vienna Declaration on human rights for older persons adopted at global meeting

GENEVA (16 November 2018) – The UN Independent Expert on the enjoyment of all human rights by older persons – Rosa Kornfeld-Matte hails the adoption of the [Vienna Declaration on the Human Rights of older persons](#) during the international conference on the human rights of older persons held on 12 and 13 November 2018 in Vienna, Austria. She commends the Austrian government and the Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs for the leadership and initiative in convening this conference.

The Declaration is part of ongoing international efforts to strengthen the rights of older people in the wake of a demographic revolution. It was endorsed by consensus by a multi-stakeholder group comprising representatives of Government authorities, the academia and civil society as well as others working on the rights of older persons and older persons themselves.

“The Vienna Declaration is an important step towards articulating the quest for more rights protection of the invisible and voiceless older population. It is an essential contribution to the ongoing discussions on normative elements by the intergovernmental United Nations Working Group on Ageing.”

“Furthermore, the Declaration also recognizes the impact that the new technologies will have on older people. Digitalization and technological tools can serve as an opportunity to help older persons maintain or strengthen their capabilities and enable them to live autonomous, independent and dignified lives. However, we must ensure that opportunities do not become challenges and guarantee that all older persons are able to fully benefit from technologies.” “Older persons must therefore be involved in the design, provision and monitoring of the use of technologies.”

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Ms. Rosa Kornfeld-Matte (Chile) was appointed by the Human Rights Council as the first [Independent Expert on the enjoyment of all human rights by older persons](#) in May 2014. Ms. Kornfeld-Matte served as the National Director of the Chilean National Service of Ageing where she designed and implemented the National Policy of Ageing. She has a long career as an academic and is the founder of the programme for older persons at the Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile.

The Independent experts are part of what is known as the [Special Procedures](#) of the Human Rights Council. Special Procedures, the largest body of independent experts in the UN Human Rights system, is the general name of the Council's independent fact-finding and monitoring mechanisms that address either specific country situations or thematic issues in all parts of the world. Special Procedures experts work on a voluntary basis; they are not UN staff and do not receive a salary for their work. They are independent from any government or organization and serve in their individual capacity.

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*This year is the **70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights**, adopted by the UN on 10 December 1948. The Universal Declaration – translated into a world record 500 languages – is rooted in the principle that “all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.” It remains relevant to everyone, every day. In honour of the 70th anniversary of this extraordinarily influential document, and to prevent its vital principles from being eroded, we are urging people everywhere to **Stand Up for Human Rights**: www.standup4humanrights.org.*